



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

**ART. XVII.—*An Account of the Kánphatís of Danodhar, in Cutch, with the Legend of Dharamnáth, their founder. By* LIEUTENANT T. POSTANS.**

*Read the 3rd of February, 1838.*

**DANODHAR** is the name applied to a large irregularly shaped and lofty hill, situated on the edge of the Runn of Cutch, about twenty miles NW. from Bhooj; attached to this place is the popular tradition, accounting for the present appearance of the Runn, and which also, at some remote period, appears to have been the means of founding the sect of Jogís, commonly known as Kánphatís.

The story goes, that during the reign of a mighty Rájá of Cutch, by name Gaddeh Sing, a Hindu Fakír of great sanctity, whilst travelling through the country, arrived at the city of *Puttun*, the then capital and residence of the Rájá of Cutch, (the place was situated a few miles from the present Mandavie, on the site of Raepoor), Dharamnáth was accompanied by his son Gharíbnáth; the latter, being despatched to the city to beg, returned unsuccessful: his father, incensed at the want of charity evinced by the inhabitants of Puttun, cursed the place, and every other bearing its name through the province, saying, “*Sab pattan sab dattan*,” in consequence of this, every town or city in Cutch so called, became *dattan* (or desolate). Quitting this scene of their maledictions, they journeyed to Danodhar, which Dharamnáth determined to make the scene of a Tapsí (or penance); for this purpose he fixed upon one of the highest of the peaks of the hill, and placing his head upon a pán leaf, is reputed to have remained standing upon his head for twelve years: Gharíbnáth, his son, fixed upon some spot in the neighbouring jungles for his dhúní, or place of retirement from the world.

At the expiration of the period of Dharamnáth's penance, beings of another world appeared to him, and giving him assurances of divine approbation, begged him to assume his natural position; he, feeling the power within him, assured his visitors that he was extremely loth to do so, being persuaded that in whatever direction he should first turn his eyes, desolation would ensue: if cities, towns, or inhabited portions of the earth, they would become ruined, and abandoned; if cultivated tracts, they would become barren and desolate. They desired him to look towards the North and West,

where then flowed the sea ; he did so, and the consequence was, the sea was in the self-same moment completely dried up, where the largest ships had before floated ; nothing presented itself but an interminable sandy and desert plain, known and wondered at to this day as the Runn of Cutch. Dharamnáth was then taken up into heaven<sup>1</sup>. Such is the tradition as related to me by the Pír, or principal at Danodhar, the head quarters of the sect of Jogís, called Kánphatís, from the peculiar ornaments which they wear in their cars. The originator of this sect is supposed to have been the renowned Dharamnáth, of Tupsí celebrity. To the eastward and at the foot of the hill, is a large range of buildings, the approach to which is through a thick jungle of thorny milk-bush, and these buildings are only visible when the traveller is immediately upon them ; they are enclosed within a wall which is turreted and loop-holed for defence, necessary, no doubt, in former and more unsettled times, when bands from some of the predatory tribes, on the other side of the Runn, made forays through Cutch for the purpose of plunder, little heeding the sanctity of those they pillaged. The buildings within this wall consist of temples, tombs of former pírs, with numerous houses and offices for the Jogís, as well as those who may lay claim to their charity, for they are hospitallers, or at least they more resemble that description of brotherhood than any I can compare them to. Their creed and practice being, to feed and shelter, without any distinction of persons, sect or caste, all who may demand their charity, without limit to the time of sojourn, or the quantity of food supplied.

The number of Jogís at Danodhar amounts to about twelve ; to meet the expense of their charity they possess about twenty villages in various parts of Cutch, some by original grants, and others acquired by purchase ; the revenue thus derived is all employed in procuring grain for distribution. In seasons of drought and scarcity, to which Cutch is periodically subject, the demands upon them are proportionally large—they are, however, rich.

The internal arrangements at Danodhar are on a very extensive scale ; in one building four immense copper cauldrons are erected about five feet from the ground, with stoves underneath each ; these are employed in boiling rice when they have a numerous company of applicants. On the opposite side of the court-yard is a large room in which the guests seat themselves to partake of the food. Opium in various proportions is also distributed. Not the

<sup>1</sup> This tradition extends as far back as 450 years.

<sup>2</sup> From Hindustani kán, an ear, phatná, to split.

least remarkable of the tenets of this sect is that which compels the Kánphatís to a life of celibacy, to which they most strictly adhere ; nor do they scruple to admit any who may desire to enrol themselves in their band under the same view : whether from this, the very secluded life they lead, or other causes, their number is but few. The situation of pír, or superior of this establishment, a post of some consideration and importance, is attained by election, but is nominally under the patronage of the Rao of Cutch, who, with some ceremony, invests the pír with a dress of honour, and seats him on the gadí as chief of the Kánphatís.

On the occasion of my visit to this place, I was pleased with the very obliging manner in which my queries were answered, and the trouble which was taken to show me over the whole of the building, explaining the use of all I saw. The pír himself received me seated on his gadí in his hall of audience, surrounded by all the members of the fraternity. He is a young man, of the name of Warnáth, of the caste rabarí (or shepherd), and had only a few months previously succeeded to the pírship. His dress was somewhat curious, consisting of the ordinary angarkhá, or body-cloth, a red shawl thrown over his shoulders, with a turban of blue silk ; some of his ornaments were costly ; I will only mention two massive gold bracelets, of the barbaric workmanship peculiar to Cutch. A peculiar kind of ring decorates or rather distorts the ears of these Jogís, its material is generally rhinoceros' horn, or agate ; these earrings are of enormous size, and stretch the lobe of the ear to a most unsightly and painful degree, (hence their title of Kánphatís) ; that of the pír's are made of richer material, gold, set with precious stones. With the exception of the pír, whose dress I have described<sup>1</sup>, the caste wear the brickdust-coloured cloth peculiar to the Fakírs throughout India. One of the privileges of the principal of this establishment is, that he does not feel himself obliged to return a salute from any one, or answer a question even from the rájá of Cutch. Suspended from his neck is a small whistle of rhinoceros' horn, which he blows as a reply, and which he also uses when he performs darsan to his divinities ; of this privilege he seemed particularly proud. I ventured to ask if I might commit his figure to paper—he was rather pleased at the idea ; his age, he told me, was thirty, but he is a sickly-looking man, old beyond his years, with a

<sup>1</sup> Captain Burnes tells me that when he visited Danodhar, the former pír wore his turban of matted hair, in imitation of that worn by all Hindu devotees ; "but," as Captain B. observes, "fashions no doubt change at Danodhar as elsewhere."

peculiarly melancholy and painful expression of countenance, the effect of the excessive use of opium, of which vice he made no secret; it is indeed not only common to this sect, but to the country generally.

There is something throughout the whole of this establishment that strikingly recalls to a European some of the Catholic institutions in continental Europe. I could not help feeling some share of respect for these poor Jogís, who sacrifice so much for seclusion and charitable purposes.

The hill being very high, and the scene of Dharamnáth's performance at least a day's journey off, I was deterred from attempting it. A small temple is erected on the spot.

Having made my salutations to the píṛ, and to the hospitable Jogís, and the worthy horseman who accompanied me having taken his pill of opium, I returned to the tents, distant about three miles.

---